

Prop 64 S1

Rev 6/29

This initiative measure is submitted to the people in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of Article II of the California Constitution.

This initiative measure amends and adds sections to the Elections Code; therefore, existing provisions proposed to be deleted are printed in *strikeout type* and new provisions proposed to be added are printed in *italic type* to indicate that they are new.

PROPOSED LAW

Business and Professions

**SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES**

SECTION

Findings and Declarations of Purpose

The People of the State of California find and declare that:

- (a) (1) This state's unfair competition laws set forth in Sections 17200 and 17500 of the Business and Professions Code are intended to protect California businesses and consumers from unlawful, unfair, and fraudulent business practices.
- (b) (2) These unfair competition laws are being misused by some private attorneys who:
- (i) (a) file frivolous lawsuits as a means of generating attorneys' fees without creating a corresponding public benefit.
 - (2) (b) file lawsuits where no client has been injured in fact.
 - (3) (c) file lawsuits for clients who have not used the defendant's product or service, viewed the defendant's advertising, or had any other business dealing with the defendant.
 - (4) (d) file lawsuits on behalf of the general public without any accountability to the public and without adequate court supervision.
- (c) (3) Frivolous unfair competition lawsuits clog our courts and cost taxpayers. Such lawsuits cost California jobs and economic prosperity, threatening the survival of small businesses and forcing businesses to raise their prices or to lay off employees to pay lawsuit settlement costs or to relocate to states that do not permit such lawsuits.
- (d) (4) It is the intent of California voters in enacting this Act to eliminate frivolous unfair competition lawsuits while protecting the right of individuals to retain an attorney and file an action for relief pursuant to this chapter.
- (e) (5) It is the intent of the California voters in enacting this Act to prohibit private attorneys from filing lawsuits for unfair competition where they have no client who has been injured in fact under the standing requirements of the United States Constitution.
- (f) (6) It is the intent of California voters in enacting this Act that only the California Attorney General and local public officials be authorized to file and prosecute actions on behalf of the general public.
- (g) (7) It is the intent of California voters in enacting this Act that the Attorney General, district attorneys, county counsels, and city attorneys maintain their public protection authority and capability under the unfair competition laws.
- (h) (8) It is the intent of California voters in enacting this Act to require that civil penalty payments be used by the Attorney General, district attorneys, county counsels, and city attorneys to strengthen the enforcement of California's unfair competition and consumer protection laws.

SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES

17200

Chapter 5 (Commerce)

with Section 17200

of Division 7 of

The Business

and Professions

Code

AW

Chapter

(commencing

with ...)

att?

SEC. 2. Section 17203 of the California Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

§ 17203. Injunctive Relief - Court Orders

Any person who engages, has engaged, or proposes to engage in unfair competition may be enjoined in any court of competent jurisdiction. The court may make such orders or judgments, including the appointment of a receiver, as may be necessary to prevent the use or employment by any person of any practice which constitutes unfair competition, as defined in this chapter, or as may be necessary to restore to any person in interest any money or property, real or personal, which may have been acquired by means of such unfair competition.

Any person may pursue representative claims or relief on behalf of others only if the claimant meets the standing requirements of Section 17204 and complies with the Code of Civil Procedure Section 382, but these limitations do not apply to claims brought under this chapter by the Attorney General, or any district attorney, county counsel, city attorney, or city prosecutor in this state.

SEC. 3. Section 17204 of the California Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

§ 17204. Actions for Injunctions by Attorney General, District Attorney, County Counsel, and City Attorneys

Actions for any relief pursuant to this chapter shall be prosecuted exclusively in a court of competent jurisdiction by the Attorney General or any district attorney or by any county counsel authorized by agreement with the district attorney in actions involving violation of a county ordinance, or any city attorney of a city, or city and county, having a population in excess of 750,000, and, with the consent of the district attorney, by a city prosecutor in any city having a full-time city prosecutor or, with the consent of the district attorney, by a city attorney in any city and county in the name of the people of the State of California upon their own complaint or upon the complaint of any board, officer, person, corporation, or association or by any person acting for the interests of itself, its members or the general public who has suffered injury in fact and has lost money or property as a result of such unfair competition.

SEC. 4. Section 17206 of the California Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

§ 17206. Civil penalty for violation of chapter

(a) Any person who engages, has engaged, or proposes to engage in unfair competition shall be liable for a civil penalty not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for each violation, which shall be assessed and recovered in a civil action brought in the name of the people of the

SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES

State of California by the Attorney General, by any district attorney, by any county counsel authorized by agreement with the district attorney in actions involving violation of a county ordinance, by any city attorney of a city, or city and county, having a population in excess of 750,000, with the consent of the district attorney, by a city prosecutor in any city having a full-time city prosecutor, or, with the consent of the district attorney, by a city attorney in any city and county, in any court of competent jurisdiction.

(b) The court shall impose a civil penalty for each violation of this chapter. In assessing the amount of the civil penalty, the court shall consider any one or more of the relevant circumstances presented by any of the parties to the case, including, but not limited to, the following: the nature and seriousness of the misconduct, the number of violations, the persistence of the misconduct, the length of time over which the misconduct occurred, the willfulness of the defendant's misconduct, and the defendant's assets, liabilities, and net worth.

(c) If the action is brought by the Attorney General, one-half of the penalty collected shall be paid to the treasurer of the county in which the judgment was entered, and one-half to the State General Fund. If the action is brought by a district attorney or county counsel, the penalty collected shall be paid to the treasurer of the county in which the judgment was entered. Except as provided in subdivision (d), if the action is brought by a city attorney or city prosecutor, one-half of the penalty collected shall be paid to the treasurer of the city in which the judgment was entered, and one-half to the treasurer of the county in which the judgment was entered. The aforementioned funds shall be for the exclusive use by the Attorney General, the district attorney, the county counsel, and the city attorney for the enforcement of consumer protection laws.

(d) If the action is brought at the request of a board within the Department of Consumer Affairs or a local consumer affairs agency, the court shall determine the reasonable expenses incurred by the board or local agency in the investigation and prosecution of the action.

Before any penalty collected is paid out pursuant to subdivision (c), the amount of any reasonable expenses incurred by the board shall be paid to the state Treasurer for deposit in the special fund of the board described in Section 205. If the board has no such special fund, the moneys shall be paid to the state Treasurer. The amount of any reasonable expenses incurred by a local consumer affairs agency shall be paid to the general fund of the municipality or county that funds the local agency.

(e) If the action is brought by a city attorney of a city and county, the entire amount of the penalty collected shall be paid to the treasurer of the city and county in which the judgment was entered for the exclusive use by the city attorney for the enforcement of consumer protection laws. However, if the action is brought by a city attorney of a city and county for

SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES

the purposes of civil enforcement pursuant to Section 17980 of the Health and Safety Code or Article 3 (commencing with Section 11570) of Chapter 10 of Division 10 of the Health and Safety Code, either the penalty collected shall be paid entirely to the treasurer of the city and county in which the judgment was entered or, upon the request of the city attorney, the court may order that up to one-half of the penalty, under court supervision and approval, be paid for the purpose of restoring, maintaining, or enhancing the premises that were the subject of the action, and that the balance of the penalty be paid to the treasurer of the city and county.

SEC. 5. Section 17535 of the California Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

§ 17535. Obtaining Injunctive Relief ^{ital}

Any person, corporation, firm, partnership, joint stock company, or any other association or organization which violates or proposes to violate this chapter may be enjoined by any court of competent jurisdiction. The court may make such orders or judgments, including the appointment of a receiver, as may be necessary to prevent the use or employment by any person, corporation, firm, partnership, joint stock company, or any other association or organization of any practices which violate this chapter, or which may be necessary to restore to any person in interest any money or property, real or personal, which may have been acquired by means of any practice in this chapter declared to be unlawful.

Actions for injunction under this section may be prosecuted by the Attorney General or any district attorney, county counsel, city attorney, or city prosecutor in this state in the name of the people of the State of California upon their own complaint or upon the complaint of any board, officer, person, corporation, or association or by any person acting for the interests of itself, its members or the general public who has suffered injury in fact and has lost money or property as a result of a violation of this chapter. Any person may pursue representative claims or relief on behalf of others only if the claimant meets the standing requirements of this Section and complies with Code of Civil Procedure Section 382, but these limitations do not apply to claims brought under this chapter by the Attorney General, or any district attorney, county counsel, city attorney, or city prosecutor in this state.

of the

roman

1972. 7/11
S.M.
A
X
V
SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES

SEC. 6. Section 17536 of the California Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

17536. Penalty for violations of chapter; Proceedings; Disposition of proceeds

(a) Any person who violates any provision of this chapter shall be liable for a civil penalty not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) for each violation, which shall be assessed and recovered in a civil action brought in the name of the people of the State of California by the Attorney General or by any district attorney, county counsel, or city attorney in any court of competent jurisdiction.

(b) The court shall impose a civil penalty for each violation of this chapter. In assessing the amount of the civil penalty, the court shall consider any one or more of the relevant circumstances presented by any of the parties to the case, including, but not limited to, the following: the nature and seriousness of the misconduct, the number of violations, the persistence of the misconduct, the length of time over which the misconduct occurred, the willfulness of the defendant's misconduct, and the defendant's assets, liabilities, and net worth.

(c) If the action is brought by the Attorney General, one-half of the penalty collected shall be paid to the treasurer of the county in which the judgment was entered, and one-half to the State Treasurer.

If brought by a district attorney or county counsel, the entire amount of penalty collected shall be paid to the treasurer of the county in which the judgment was entered. If brought by a city attorney or city prosecutor, one-half of the penalty shall be paid to the treasurer of the county and one-half to the city. The aforementioned funds shall be for the exclusive use by the Attorney General, district attorney, county counsel, and city attorney for the enforcement of consumer protection laws.

(d) If the action is brought at the request of a board within the Department of Consumer Affairs or a local consumer affairs agency, the court shall determine the reasonable expenses incurred by the board or local agency in the investigation and prosecution of the action.

Before any penalty collected is paid out pursuant to subdivision (c), the amount of such reasonable expenses incurred by the board shall be paid to the State Treasurer for deposit in the special fund of the board described in Section 205. If the board has no such special fund the moneys shall be paid to the State Treasurer. The amount of such reasonable expenses incurred by a local consumer affairs agency shall be paid to the general fund of the municipality which funds the local agency.

(e) As applied to the penalties for acts in violation of Section 17530, the remedies provided by this section and Section 17534 are mutually exclusive.

1992.430
S.5

SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES

SEC. 7. In the event that between July 1, 2003, and the effective date of this measure, legislation is enacted that is inconsistent with this measure, said legislation is void and repealed irrespective of the code in which it appears.

SEC. 8. In the event that this measure and another measure or measures relating to unfair competition law shall appear on the same statewide election ballot, the provisions of the other measures shall be deemed to be in conflict with this measure. In the event that this measure shall receive a greater number of affirmative votes, the provisions of this measure shall prevail in their entirety, and the provisions of the other measure relating to unfair competition law shall be null and void.

SEC. 9. If any provision of this ~~Act~~, or part thereof, is for any reason held to be invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining provisions shall not be affected, but shall remain in full force and effect, and to this end the provisions of this ~~Act~~ are severable.

**SUBJECT ## TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES**

**SUBJECT TO COURT
ORDERED CHANGES**